

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) and Congressman Michael A. Arcuri (D-NY) today announced that they have secured final congressional approval of more than \$7.18 million for the construction of a Grape Genetics Research facility at the New York State Agriculture Experiment Station in Geneva, ongoing apple and grape research programs at Cornell University, and other agricultural research projects at the school. The funds are included in the Omnibus Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2009, which passed the House yesterday.

"Agriculture continues to play a vital role in New York's economy. These federal research dollars will help improve the quality of crops and other farm products, which will help New York farmers become more profitable and provide better products to consumers," said Hinchey. "We are very fortunate to have Cornell University in New York and I am excited about all of the great agricultural research they will conduct with these funds."

Arcuri said, "I am glad to see critical research funding coming to our region to help local farmers keep crops healthy and increase yields – creating jobs and helping our Upstate economy. Agriculture is a huge part of the economy of New York State, especially communities here in Upstate. I am glad to work with Congressman Hinchey to bring taxpayer dollars back home to help local farmers and support national agricultural research going on in our very own laboratories and Universities."

The funds Hinchey and Arcuri secured together are allocated as follows:

- **\$2,192,000, Center for Grape Genetics, Geneva, NY:** The funds will go toward construction of a \$29.6 million USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) facility that will focus on research programs to help make the U.S. wine industry more competitive. The Center for Grape Genetic Research will replace the current outdated ARS facilities in Geneva with a state-of-the-art research building. Congress has now appropriated a total of \$13.13 million for the center. ARS has completed planning, design, and site prep work. The agency is ready to commence construction as soon as the balance of construction funds is appropriated.

- **\$1,454,000, Viticulture Consortium:** The Viticulture Consortium (VC) is a multi-state special research grant that operates as a national competitive grants program to fund applied, mission specific research relevant to grape growing. The VC enhances research coordination and

collaboration, improves efficiency, and eliminates duplication of effort. The consortium has now received more than \$10.3 million to enhance grape production throughout the country. The wine and grape industry is a \$7 billion industry in New York State. New York ranks third in national grape production, behind only California and Washington. Nationwide, the wine and grape industry is responsible for 1.1 million jobs and \$33 million in wages paid. The Congressional Wine Caucus recently oversaw a national economic impact study which concluded that the wine, grape and grape products industries contribute over \$162 billion to the American economy each year.

- **\$346,000, Apple Fire Blight Research:** The apple fire blight research seeks to understand and manage the apple fire blight disease by investigating the molecular basis of disease resistance in apples and developing disease resistant apple varieties. Fire blight is the most damaging disease affecting apple trees in New York State and nationally. Crop and tree losses and the costs of control measures cost more than \$100 million per year nationally. In a bad year, New York State losses can reach \$10 million. All 60,000 acres of apples in New York State are vulnerable to the disease and may succumb when the weather favors the disease with rain, heavy dews, and high humidity. More than \$2.6 million has now been appropriated for this project. Apple is the biggest tree fruit crop in New York, worth more than \$2 billion annually. New York State produces 25 million bushels of apples each year (53 percent sold as fresh fruit and 47 percent for processing). New York's 694 family apple farms create 10,000 agricultural jobs. Only Washington State grows more apples than New York.

Using his seat on the House Appropriations Committee, Hinchey also secured the following funding for projects at Cornell University:

- **\$131,000, Computational Agriculture:** The Computational Agriculture Initiative funds a program to enable farmers to use high performance computational tools to make sound crop management decisions.

- **\$258,000, Environmental Research:** The Environmental Research grant is administered by Cornell's North American Nitrogen Center. The program seeks to gain a better understanding of the sources and sinks of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment in a large rural watershed of mixed land use.

- **\$693,000, Food Safety Research Consortium:** The Food Safety Research Consortium works with consumer groups, industry, and government to conduct food safety research and to

facilitate the development and use of tools to help the food industry and regulatory agencies improve food safety.

- **\$377,000, Human Nutrition:** The Human Nutrition Grant supports research to increase fundamental knowledge of human nutrition, with a special focus on nutritional requirements and nutrient dynamics during pregnancy in ethnically and genetically diverse populations.

- **\$693,000, Livestock and Dairy Policy:** This program will help Cornell and Texas A&M evaluate policy proposals of national significance to the dairy and livestock industries. Both the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Congress rely on this program for analysis of proposals that affect the dairy and livestock industries.

- **\$1.04 million, Beef Cattle Genetic Evaluation:** Will help Cornell and other universities with work to develop sophisticated genetic evaluation techniques to assist beef producers in breeding cattle for select traits.